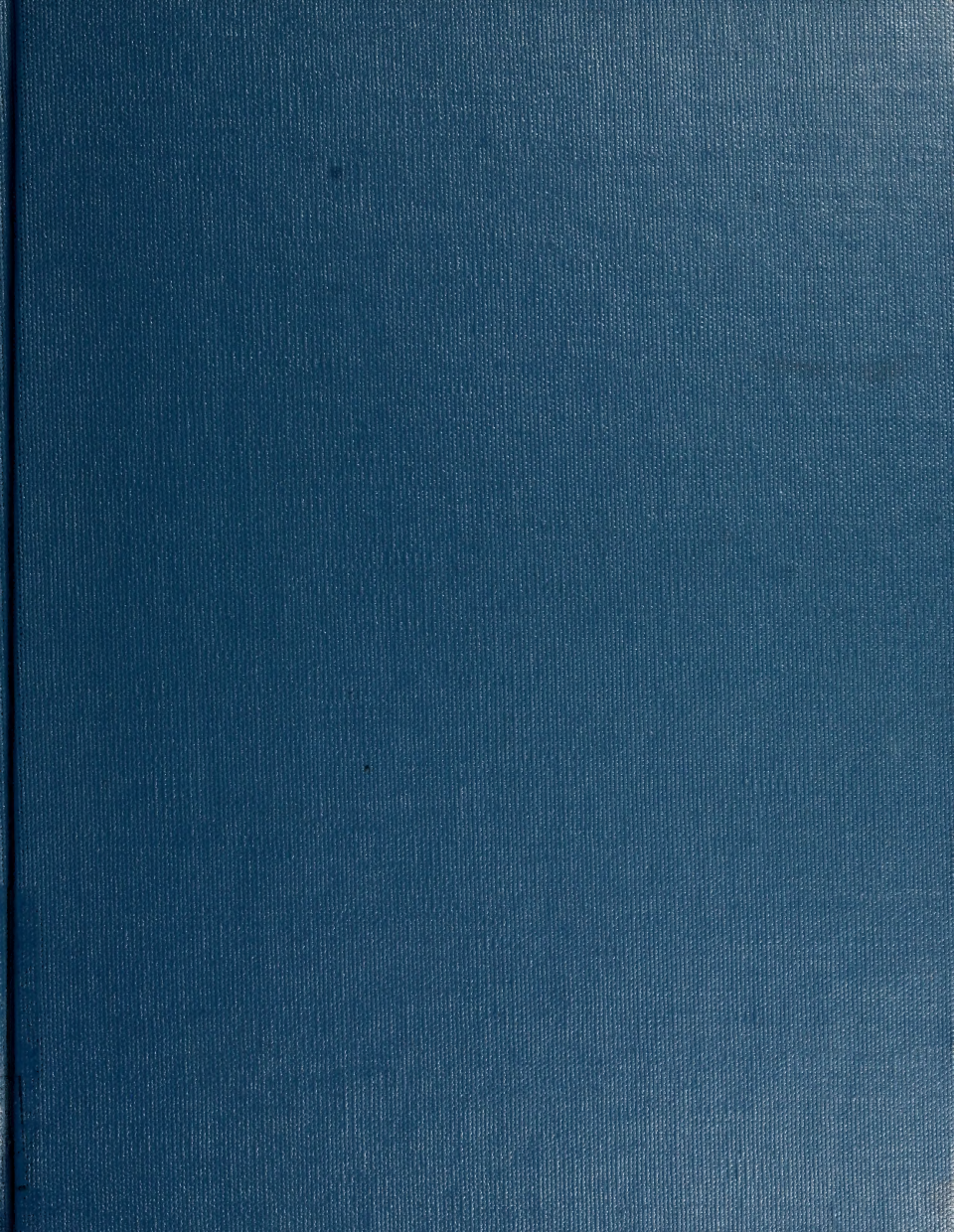






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Gorgas, Josiah, 1818-1883.
Fragments of history of the
family of our maternal
ancestor, Stephen Atkinson.

Stephen Atkinson was an Englishman who
in his manhood came to this country and
settled in the State of Ohio. He
came into our maternal ancestor's
country and for some time was in possession of a
property in the State of Ohio. Subsequently he
purchased a large tract of land on the border of
Ohio and Kentucky. He was buried in
the "Friends' Burial Ground" in the city of Cin-
cinnati. He was the second husband
of our mother.

Stephen Atkinson

by his grand daughter

Our Mother

dictated by her and written by

our brother

Josiah Gorges

A.D. 1840.

at Louisville, Kent Co. Ohio (at our house.)

Compiled by S. A. Gorges.

Memoranda of
of the family of
for historical interest

Stephen H. H. H.

for some change

Gen. H. H. H.

with H. H. H. and H. H. H.

for H. H. H.

Gen. H. H. H.

for H. H. H.

for H. H. H. and H. H. H.

Gen. H. H. H.

Stephen Atkins was an Englishman who in early manhood came to this country, an emigrant with William Penn[#], himself belonging to the Society of which Penn was then the head. He came into that part of Pennsylvania now Lancaster County, and in time came into possession of property in Lancaster county. Subsequently he purchased a farm near Lancaster on the Conestoga, where he resided until his death. He was buried in the "Friends" burial grounds in the city of Lancaster. He was twice married, the second time to Margaret Thornberry, also the daughter of a Quaker. By his first marriage he had one son, Stephen. The issue of his second connection were four sons and three daughters, Mathew, Milton, Thomas and Robert, Nancy, Hannah and Margaret. On the demise of the father, Stephen, the eldest came in to possession of the bulk of the estate, he died

William Penn sailed for America in the ship "Welcome" August 30, 1682 — near one hundred colonists came with him — he returned to England & came again to America near the beginning of the year 1700 — (Vide — Pa. Historic. Rec.)

early, leaving an only son, an infant. Through the misconduct of the administrator the infant son Stephen was disinherited, and the property passed into the hands of the Ross family. -

The descendants of this Stephen now (1870) reside in Carrollton in Carroll Co. Ohio. His wife was one of the Hollidays of Hollidaysburg of Pennsylvania. #

Matthew the next son removed to Washington county, Pa. where his descendants still live.

Wilton had several sons, one of whom, an eminent jeweler, lived at Baltimore Md - two settled at Charleston S. C. - The mother of these children was a French woman, and a la mode française was a jeweler by occupation; they had two daughters who married two brothers by the name of "Styger" of Baltimore.

Robert (Alkinson) the youngest son married a young lady of,

In 1855, my father and mother took up their abode for a time at Carrollton, being next door neighbor to the same Stephen Ross family, where, upon a visit to my parents, it was my privilege to meet this cousin of our mother. From him I was pleased to find a corroboration of some of the facts above mentioned.

S. A. S.

Pittsburgh by the name of Hughes. Mr. H. moved to Baltimore, where he lived until his demise. He left a widow with two children, Nancy the eldest daughter married a Mr. Davis of Lancaster county; & they had two sons, both of whom died in the Indian war, at Saint Charles defeat, one of them, the younger, Matthew, was captured and tortured by the Indians. Hannah the younger daughter was married to a Mr. Brown of Lancaster Pa., who left her a widow with several children. She supported herself and family by teaching a school. One of her sons, James, became a printer. After a time the family removed to Philadelphia where James by his vocation was enabled to support his Mother & his younger sister Margaret & prospering in a state of single blessedness took up her abode with her elder sister.

Thomas (Atkins) the third son, according to the custom of the times when young men however good their prospects, thought it expedient to become tradesmen, learned the art of a mason. He was a man of respectable acquirements, such as to fit

him for all the ordinary calls of business, in person he was eminently prepossessing.

At an early age he went to Reading in Pa. where he was married to Salome Widenor daughter of Peter Widenor of Dutch descent. Her father was the possessor of one thousand acres of the most valuable land about Reading. There were three daughters Sophia Salome and Mary.

Sophia was married to John Biddle of Philadelphia, surgeon general of Pennsylvania. Mr Biddle acted as commissary to some part of the Pennsylvania troops until about the time of the battle of Brandywine, when suspicion of treasonable practices rested upon him, & he was suspected of adulterating the flour to be used for the troops, when finding the country too warm for him, he fled to the British lines and afterwards to Nova Scotia. Upon his flight all his property was confiscated and sold. Mr Biddle never returned to his native country — his wife Sophia revisited her native home applied to Governor Mifflin for her husband's pardon.

Mr. Lade her welcome to the State; but threatened to hang Widdle upon the nearest oak tree should he ever return. They had two sons and three daughters Edward, John, Polly, Sophia and Lydia. Sophia is married (1880) to Mr. Cassely and lives at Cincinnati Ohio[#] Lydia is married and lives near Pittsburgh - her husband is the owner of extensive salt works near that city.

Mary (Widener) the third daughter of Peter Widener, was married to Daniel Glymer a lawyer, a man of bad character but of high standing and large wealth. He was a son of George Glymer a signer of the declaration of Independence. They had two sons Edward and William, the first named is dead, and William lives at Reading in Pa.

When Salome was four years of age, her father Widener died, and after a short widowhood her mother married

[#] My brother Doctor Chas. R. Gungas, relates to me that while attending Medical lectures at Cincinnati he made the acquaintance of this lady & her family, visiting there frequently - that they readily recognized the relationship and treated him with great friendship. - S. H. G.

Whitehead, then an Attorney at law. Two daughters were the fruits of this marriage, Elizabeth and Penelope. Elizabeth was married to Captain Pry from the east, an officer of the United States Army during the Revolution. Captain Pry, like many other disbanded officers, was much embarrassed in pecuniary matters, and had no fixed means of support, and after about a year's union he died, much lamented by his wife; his pecuniary embarrassments drove him to commit suicide. About eleven years after the death of Captain Pry, Elizabeth married Mr Wentz of Lancaster Pa. who at some time was a member of the Legislature of Pennsylvania. After this marriage she removed with her husband to Middletown Pa, where they kept a hotel. Here Mr Wentz died. His widow continued keeping the hotel. About two years after the demise of the husband, a gentleman by the name of Taylor from Seneca county, New York state, happened to stop at her house, and took such a fancy to her at first sight, that he determined -

to marry her, and seeking the intercession of a friend, without any further count=rip, her consent was obtained and they were married. Disposing of her property, she at once accompanied him to his native place on the shores of Seneca Lake, seven miles south of Geneva in the State of New York. After about twelve years she was again left a widow*. She continued to live in this her lovely home, until the day of her death, at the advanced age of about seventy four years. She had but one child, and it by her first husband, and it died in infancy.

Penelope (Whitchard) married her cousin John Whitchard and removed with him to Philadelphia. He was engaged in mercantile business in that city up to ^{about} the beginning of the war of 1812, when in consequence of some unfavorable war measures &

* During my residence at Lyons in Wayne County, N.Y. between the years 1830 and 1855 it was my pleasure, in company with my sisters Sarah (Mrs Philip Dorsheimer) & Eliza (Mrs Chapman - then yet single) to visit repeatedly, the dear old - Aunt of our mother in her charming home - & to hear her relate this happy romance of her life, with other pleasant reminiscences of the past. E. H. S.



having a large quantity of flour on hand, he failed. About this time Penelope died, and with the remnant of his effects Whitehead removed to Meadville Pa. and kept a school there. They had thirteen children*.

Having thus disposed of the collateral branches of the family of Thomas Atkinson and Salome Widener we proceed to pursue their own fortunes. Thomas was born about the year 1731, and Salome on the 7th day of January 1735. They were married about the year 1742 at Reading in Pennsylvania, where they continued to reside until after the war of the Revolution. She came into possession of her patrimony, one third of the one thousand acres before mentioned, of which her father was possessed and they they farmed during their residence here. They had two children born to them were "Betty", afterwards the wife of Jacob Wicks.

* James Whitehead who was a frequent visitor at Wykes, N.Y. of the house of Mr. Philip Donckeleer from 1830 to 35 & who made his home at his Aunt Taylor's in Seneca Lake & whom I often met was one of these children.



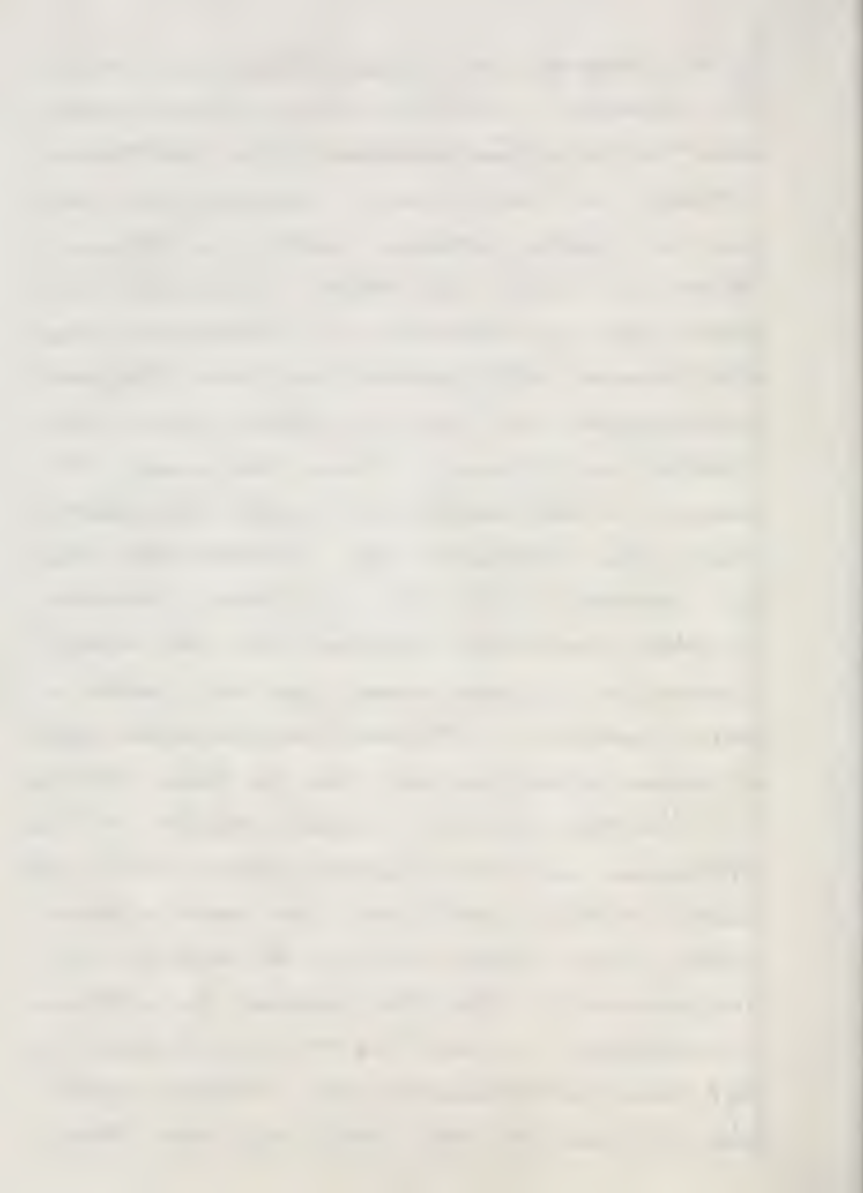
man of Lancaster county Pa, and Sophia
(our mother) About the middle of the
Revolution, on account of the uncertainty
tenure of property, and the doubtful
and oftentimes gloomy forebodings of the
great struggle, they became anxious to
sell their property, and accordingly disposed
of it to General Mifflin subsequently Gov-
ernor Mifflin, and received pay therefor
in "Continental Money", part of which, about
eleven hundred dollars Mr Biddle re-
ceived before his treacherous flight to the
British. The money so received, as it
well known, became soon wholly worth-
less, so that the amount they received
for their valuable lands was lost as an
instance of their loss, and of the value
of the money they received, Mrs Atkinson
paid three hundred dollars of this money
for one barrel of Sugar. Thus their whole
patrimony was lost. At the time of the
deeding of this land Salome was yet
a minor, and consequently ^{her signature} conveyed
no title. During their residence at
Reding Mr Atkinson served in the army

of the Revolution and was at the battle of
Brandywine. He served in the company
of Captain Weister afterward Governor
Weister of Pennsylvania. His farming team
was impressed into the service of the
needy government, and used until after
the battle of Yorktown, and for all of
which no compensation was even offered
or obtained. The team was totally ruined
and lost.

1 Before the close of the war,
Mr. Atkinson removed his family to a
place called Silver Springs, near Mechan-
icsburgh Pa. where they kept a public
hotel. Here they lived four years and
another child Sarah afterward Mrs Al-
bright was born to them. From this
place they removed to a farm on the
Juniata, on the State road from Carlisle to
Sunbury, at the mouth of Raccoon Creek.
Here they lived four or five years and
had two more children Thomas and
Matthew. On account of the dangerous and ex-
posed condition of this country, which was then
the frontier and far west, they disposed of

of this property to Matthew Atkinson and removed Maryland and lived a Thomas Creek valley, about 20 miles from Siltstown. Here Mr Atkinson followed his trade of mason, and was soon engaged in erecting extensive buildings for Major Shields, Mr Blair and others. They lived here four years and removed to Baltimore. Here Mr Atkinson still followed his trade. His first employment was upon a house for a Mr Martin, an Attorney. Soon the family removed to the country seat of Mr Lux about a mile from Baltimore city. About this time he undertook the task of placing pillars of stone under the courthouse in the city & excavating a passage-way for the public street under it. He here had a severe spell of fever which confined him for three months.

Mrs. Lux was a distant relative of Mrs. Atkinson and was instrumental in their removal to these parts, and her good offices were much needed during the sickness of her husband - After the recovery of Mr Atkinson he contracted for and built the jail and Market house at Alexandria Va. Shortly after this he sent for his family and had them



conveyed to Alexandria by water, and during the passage thither their bark ran upon a sand bar and was delayed three days, when they were taken off by another vessel, the passage occupying five days. At Alexandria they lived five years. Afterward they lived about four miles from Alexandria. Here they had the Lees for neighbors, Charles, and Henry, and was employed by them. Penelope and Susan (afterward Mrs Fremble) were born in this place. Removing four miles farther into the country, Mr Atkinson rented a farm of several hundred acres from Doctor Warburton; but did not make a success of farming. From here they removed to Loudon county Va, about twenty three miles from Alexandria. Here his health failed him very much and he was obliged to carry on his business of building by hired help. This was about the year 1793. At this time he had a mill under contract for a Mill Dam water. Becoming dissatisfied he proposed to Mrs Atkinson to return to Pennsylvania, and that she should take five of the children, leaving him the remaining

two and proceed to settle herself Buncashere
in Pennsylvania, and he would follow her
with the remaining two children as soon
as he finished his contracts and obtained
the reward. She did so, — and made her
way on horseback with her five children
to Ephrata in Lancaster county. He proposed
to follow in six weeks. Mrs. Atkinson wait-
ted the appointed time, and an additional
time and still no husband came. Becoming
uneasy she mounted again on horseback
and retraced her way to Virginia where
she had left him. She found all well,
the contracts not yet finished and Mr.
Atkinson could not yet go with her.
So another horse was bought, the two
remaining children mounted upon it and
our grand mother resumed her way home-
ward with the promise from her husband
that he would join her in three weeks
— Three weeks elapsed — and another
three weeks — and yet another — and he
came not — In about six months a
letter came from an old neighbor (Mr.
Piddie) bearing to her the melancholy

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news of his death.

Mrs Atkinson joined the Society of "Brethren" at Ephrata and having the care of her seven children, had to use every known means of industry and economy to support herself and her family. Her two sons Thomas and Matthew were put out to become printers. The two eldest daughters Betty and Sophia, were placed with relatives.

After spending the winter with an Aunt at Ephrata, Mrs. Atkinson removed to Reamstown in Lancaster Co. and engaged in teaching a school, for which avocation she seems to have been qualified by the good education her step father had given her in common with her sisters.

C. B.

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